

HEA 1241, Physician Assistants, was signed by Governor Daniels on April 26, 2007. The new Act does several things which will be of interest to physicians and physician assistants.

The official synopsis states: Physician assistants. Authorizes a physician to delegate to a physician assistant duties that are within the supervising physician's scope of practice, including prescribing and dispensing certain drugs and medical devices. Requires that a supervising physician must be either: (1) physically present at the location where services are performed by the physician assistant; or (2) immediately available for consultation and in the county or a contiguous county of the location where the services are being rendered or at a hospital or health facility. Requires the supervisory agreement between the physician and the physician assistant to include certain information and be approved by the medical licensing board. Establishes requirements for a physician assistant to prescribe certain drugs. Requires the patient to be seen by the physician in certain circumstances. Changes references from certification to licensure of physician assistants. Makes certain other changes concerning the physician assistant committee and licensure of physician assistants.

This legislation, which provides prescriptive authority for physician assistants, goes into effect July 1, 2007; however, there are certain requirements that must be met before PA's are permitted to prescribe.

PA's must have been employed as a PA for one year (1,800 hours) and participated in 30 contact hours of pharmacology at an approved school.

A PA may not begin prescribing until the Supervisory Agreement/Job Description is submitted to the Committee and approved by the MLB.

In order to prescribe controlled substances to the extent permitted by the Act, a physician assistant must obtain both a state Controlled Substance Registration and a Federal Drug Enforcement Administration permit.

The Medical Licensing Board and the Physician Assistant Committee will work with the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency to implement the new law as soon as possible. More information concerning the application process will be available on the website: <http://www.in.gov/pla/bandc/pac/>